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Message Text

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ACTION EUR-08

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EURE-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 SAM-01

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AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMCONSUL OPORTO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
USMISSION NATO
DIA WASHDC
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER
CINCLANT NORFOLK VA

S E C R E T LISBON 6105

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-4
TAGS: PINT, PO
SUBJ: VIEWS OF PPD SYG SA CARNEIRO ON POLITICAL
DEVELOPMENTS

REF: LISBON 6092 DTG 151452Z OCT 75

SUMMARY: SYG SA CARNEIRO OF POPULAR DEMOCRATS SEES WELL-
COORDINATED COMMUNIST OFFENSIVE UTILIZING RADICAL SOLDIER
ORGANIZATION, FAR LEFT FRONT GROUP AND MEDIA IN EFFORT TO
TOPPLE AZEVEDO GOVERNMENT. COMMUNISTS RECENTLY SENT PEOPLE
TO STIR UP TROUBLE IN MADEIRA AND AZORES IN EFFORT TO PROVOKE
INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENTS AND ADD TO GOP'S PROBLEMS. FABIAO,
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ROSA COUTINHO AND POSSIBLE OTELO ARE PART OF EFFORT TO TOPPLE

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AZEVEDO. IF AZEVEDO FAILS, SA CARNEIRO BELIEVES COSTA GOMES WILL
RENOMINATE VASCO GONCALVES.
POPULAR DEMOCRATS WOULD THEN ADOPT CONFRONTATION STRATEGY AND
SUPPORT A REVOLT IN THE NORTH. END SUMMARY.

1. AT LUNCH ON OCTOBER 15 FRANCISCO SA CARNEIRO, SECRETARY
GENERAL OF THE POPULAR DEMOCRATIC PARTY (PPD), GAVE ME HIS
ANALYSIS OF CURRENT POLITICAL SCENE. HE SEES MASSIVE
COMMUNIST OFFENSIVE UNDER WAY AGAINST AZEVEDO GOVERNMENT.
HE VIEWS BOTH SOLDIERS UNITED WILL WIN (SUV) AND THE SEVEN
PARTY FAR LEFT GROUP (FUR) AS TOOLS OF THE COMMUNISTS
(PCP). THE COMMUNIST STRATEGY IS TO ATTACK ON ALL FRONTS
AND TO UNDERMINE AZEVEDO'S SUPPORT WITHIN THE MILITARY.
THE ONLY PURPOSE OF THE PCP PARTICIPATION IN THE GOVERNMENT
IS TO SABOTAGE FROM WITHIN. A WEEK AGO AZEVEDO TOLD SA
CARNEIRO THAT IF THE COMMUNISTS UNDERMINED THE MILITARY
IN THE NORTH HE WAS THROUGH. SA CARNEIRO VIEWS ARMY CHIEF
FABIAO'S "COMPROMISE" IN OPORTO (REFTEL) AS THE FIRST STEP IN
THIS DIRECTION.

2. SA CARNEIRO PLACES NO CONFIDENCE IN FABIAO WHO HE SAYS
IS REGULARLY VISITED BY CUNHAL. ("IT IS COMMON KNOWLEDGE
THAT CUNHAL IS A RECENT BUT FREQUENT VISITOR TO FABIO'S
OFFICE.") IF FABIAO IS NOT REMOVED AND DISCIPLINE RESTORED
WITHIN A COUPLE OF WEEKS,THE AZEVEDO GOVERNMENT WILL FALL.
SA CARNEIRO BELIEVES THAT THE PCP STRATEGY IS BEING
DEVELOPED BY VASCO GONCALVES AND PERSONNEL FROM FORMER ARMED
FORCES J-5 (AGIT-PROP), THAT FABIAO, ADM ROSA COUTINHO AND
POSSIBLY COPCON HEAD OTELO CARVALHO ARE COLLABORATORS. IF
AZEVEDO FALLS, SA CARNEIRO BELIEVES COSTA GOMES WOULD AGAIN
NAME VASCO GONCALVES PRIME MINISTER. SA CARNEIRO POINTED
OUT THAT VASCO GONCALVES USES A PRESIDENTIAL CAR AND LIVES
IN QUARTERS FURNISHED BY THE PRESIDENCY.

3. SA CARNEIRO SAID HE HAS DEFINITE INFORMATION THAT THE PCP
HAD VERY RECENTLY SENT PEOPLE TO MADEIRA AND TO THE AZORES
TO CONDUCT A CAMPAIGN OF UNREST. THE OBJECTIVE IS TO
PROVOKE RIGHTWING INDEPENDENCE GROUPS AND THEREBY HELP TO BRING
DOWN AZEVEDO GOVERNMENT. ACCORDING TO SA CARNEIRO THE PCP HAS
MADE A DECISION TO SACRIFICE AZORES AND MADEIRA, PARTICULARLY
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THE LATTER, IF NECESSARY, IN ORDER TO REGAIN ITS GRIP ON
THE MAINLAND.

4. SA CARNEIRO SAID PPD WAS ENGAGED IN ALL OUT EFFORT TO
STOP THIS OFFENSIVE. HE HIMSELF PLANNED TO HOLD RALLIES
IN FARO AND THE ALENTEJO EVEN THOUGH SOME PERSONAL RISK IS
INVOLVED. IF AZEVEDO GOVERNMENT FALLS AND VASCO GONCALVES RETURNS,
PPD WILL ENTER INTO OPEN CONFRONTATION WITH THE GOVERNMENT.

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BASIC STRATEGY WOULD BE THAT WHICH WAS CONTEMPLATED AT THE TIME OF THE CRISIS OVER GONCALVES'S OUSTER, I.E. A REVOLT FROM THE NORTH. SA CARNEIRO WAS CONFIDENT THAT THE PPD HAD ENOUGH MILITARY AND CIVILIAN SUPPORT TO CARRY OUT SUCH A STRATEGY. HE WOULD NOT HOWEVER, ALLY THE PPD WITH SPINOLA'S MDLP OR FAR-RIGHT ELP SINCE THE PRESENT PORTUGUESE PROBLEMS "HAD TO BE SOLVED FROM WITHIN."

5. COMMENT: SA CARNEIRO'S ANALYSIS IS PESSIMISTIC AND, IN PART, SELF-SERVING, BUT IT IS PLAUSIBLE. THE PCP AND THE RADICAL LEFT ARE OBVIOUSLY PULLING OUT ALL THE STOPS. WITH PEOPLE LIKE FABIAO AND OTELO HEADING THE ARMY ESTABLISHMENT, THE AZEVEDO GOVERNMENT'S EFFORTS TO RESTORE DISCIPLINE ARE LIKE TRYING TO PUSH JELLY UP A HILL. THE CLOCK IS TICKING ON AZEVEDO AND HE KNOWS IT. I AGREE FULLY WITH SA CARNEIRO'S COMMENT TO ME ON PARTING THAT NOW MORE THAN EVER IS THE TIME FOR THE MODERATE FORCES TO RALLY. HE HIMSELF SEEMED TO RELISH THE CHALLENGE.

6. AT SEPARATE LUNCHEON TODAY, SOCIALIST PARTY LEADER AND SOARES CONFIDANT, CUNHA REGO, GAVE DCM SIMILAR, SOMBER ASSESSMENT. SAID PARTY WOULD STICK WITH AZEVEDO, BUT DID NOT KNOW HOW LONG HIS GOVERNMENT COULD LAST. ADDED THAT, FOR FIRST TIME, PARTY LEADERSHIP SERIOUSLY BEGINNING TO THINK OF ARMING ITS ACTIVISTS.
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